



March 12, 2014

General Assembly  
Education Committee  
Room 3100, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

**RE: H.B. No. 5523 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY  
PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFFING LEVELS.**

Senator Stillman, Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee:

My name is Tim Riddle, I am a paraprofessional in the Brookfield School District and President of The CSEA Paraprofessional Council. While I wish I could be there today, the scheduling of this public hearing conflicts with my work schedule. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 5523: An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Paraprofessional Staffing Levels.

Paraprofessionals are a vital part of the modern classroom. One of the phrases I hear a lot when discussing our work is "We are in the business of meeting the needs of the student." That is the truth. Para educators work in areas as diverse as clerical, guidance, library media centers, audio-visual, computer technology, one to one with students, ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis), and the vast range of Special Education positions providing support for students and teachers. One of our paramount goals is to socialize kids and get them ready for the future.

HB 5523 would establish a task force to study paraprofessional staffing levels so that we can take a best practices approach to staffing levels and ensure that we have the proper number of paras in the classroom and are able to provide the training necessary so that the needs of the students are being properly addressed. Professional development and trainings are essential to the growth of paraprofessionals to meet the needs of our students.

I also ask that you oppose SB 425: An Act that threatens to turn the State Education Resource Center into a "quasi-public agency" not subject to the same level of oversight, transparency and accountability as other state agencies.

Tim Riddle  
30 Washington Ave.  
Danbury CT  
860-249-3557